

# **High Sierra Camp Letter and Alfred Marmolejo Letter**

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## **High Sierra Camp Letter and Alfred Marmolejo Letter Summary**

In this recording, Cal Poly Pomona professor Ken Kitch reads aloud two letters related to the history of the Voorhis Campus. Kitch collected the letters as part of his project to document the history of the campus.

The Voorhis Campus in San Dimas was the first location of the southern branch of the California Polytechnic College that eventually developed into Cal Poly Pomona. The Voorhis Campus was originally founded as the Voorhis School for Boys in 1928 by automotive executive Charles B. Voorhis as a school for underprivileged boys. Voorhis' son, H. Jerry Voorhis, served as headmaster.

The High Sierra Camp Letter was written by the younger Voorhis in 1971. It details the history of the campsite, which was intended as a vacation site for students of the Voorhis School for Boys. Alfred Marmolejo was an alumnus of the Voorhis School and recounts his time there and his involvement with the campsite in the letter he wrote for Kitch.

### **Subject Headings**

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona  
Voorhis, Jerry  
Voorhis School for Boys

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# High Sierra Camp Letter and Alfred Marmolejo Letter

March 31, 1975

*Letters Written by Jerry Voorhis and Alfred Marmolejo and Read by Kenneth Kitch  
Transcribed by Larry Huizar and Iman Mirza*

## Beginning of Tape 1 – High Sierra Camp Letter by Jerry Voorhis read by Kenneth Kitch

**KK:** [unintelligible] California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. I've been working on the developing of a history of the Voorhis Campus where I was stationed for some 10 years roughly at an educational center.

**KK:** And one of the parts of the history, which should by no means be reflected in the accumulation of the oral history part of this study, is the story of the High Sierra Camp written by Jerry Voorhis in December 1971. There's a description of the camp, which was established, and which is still maintained under certain auspices in the Sierra Mountains. It was a refuge for the boys during the summer and a rescue for the staff people who you could have well guessed needed a rest after a year with a collection of active young men with whom they had been so closely housed and activated.

**KK:** The logical reader of this should be Jerry Voorhis but he's not available, and so I am stepping in and making sure that this is a part of the university's oral history collection revolving around the history of the Voorhis campus. Here is the story of the High Sierra Camp read to you on March 31<sup>st</sup>—the day after Easter 1975:

*The Voorhis School for Boys was for many years, in the 20s and 30s, a place where homeless boys came to live together. They lived, worked, played, and studied in a cluster of white Spanish style buildings on an oak-dotted mesa in the San Jose Hills near San Dimas. It was in many ways a complete community: there was a chapel, a schoolhouse, citrus groves, gardens, poultry house, print shop, carpenter and machine shops, and the cottage homes.*

*A cottage mother presided over each cottage home with 12 boys and their family; this was a 24-hour job. She needed a vacation at least once a year. And so, a plan was devised whereby a couple of the men teachers—one of them Robert Balch and the other the author of this article, Jerry Voorhis—would take the boys in the school bus to the high mountains for a summer camping experience while the cottage mothers had vacations. There were two camps each summer so that half of the cottage mothers would be relieved by one, the other half by the second camp, and the plan worked well.*

*Transportation from the school near San Dimas to the camp site was by a school bus for the boys and by a truck with the necessary gear and supplies. The 350 miles journey—more than half of it across desert with itself was something of an adventure for us—was to say the least, not the most powerful of vehicles. Filled with capacity with 30 or more boys and their personal baggage, they carry a heavy load. The [radiator] boiled with unfailing frequency on each up[wards] grade to*

*be any consequences and there were a number of these. The [unintelligible] canyon grades between the [unintelligible] and Palmdale is difficult enough, but when we came to Sherwin Grade, beyond Bishop, it was necessary to carry extra water in containers; and for the older boys, to hike up the grade to lighten the road. Even [then] frequent stops for breath were necessary as the vehicle chucked its laborious way to the top of the grade. Return trips were easier being largely down grade, [and] almost always made it night when the desert [unintelligible]. We would be camped [in] after an early supper and final clean up and arrived back at the school in time for breakfast. It was a little hard on the drivers but worth every bit of the effort.*

*The first summer's experience was a vivid memory, where we camped on damp ground on the banks of a small [unintelligible] stream near June Lake. It almost froze to death at night, so we never felt we could afford sleeping bags and each of us had just two woolen blankets with which to try to ward off the cold of the mountain nights. We kept the fire going but we also made the age-old discovery that heat rises rather than spreads; so that while the fire will warm you if you stand beside it, it helps very little if you lie down to sleep.*

*The summer following, we made a wiser choice. We found a spot on the banks of Sherman Creek not far from the then tiny hamlet of Mammoth Lakes—replaced with well-above the creek and therefore dry. Ponderosa pines towered over it, so there was comparatively little underbrush to be cleared away. During our first summer there, we slept again in our blankets on the ground and cooked over open fires. Speaking of cooking, while the boys never complained, it was, I am sure, questionable quality. Probably some of the boys could have done it better but the two men—Balch and myself—took the task upon ourselves. Canned corn beef hash was our staple, along with canned fruits and vegetables, cereal, bread, and butter. We used condensed milk; then with water from the stream which was crystal clear and pollution free. With minor variations, this was our diet while we were in camp; a very different one prevailed when I took groups for the boys out overnight hiking expeditions but of those adventures more later.*

*We return to our [unintelligible] creek campsite on the third summer and decided to make a bit of permanent camp. So, we bought some secondhand tents and built platforms for them; [we] purchased cots and mattresses and got ourselves off the ground for better sleeping. We also negotiated a lease from the U.S. Forest Service, which leases [camping grounds] from time to time to this very day—a period of more than 40 years. From that third year forward, we began to improve the camping and we built a lodge.*

*The boys and I worked under Mr. [inaudible]'s expert directions. It served his kitchen, dining, and evening meeting room. But [inaudible] was installed and went in the lodge and there was a fireplace at the other end. Plenty of down timbers, sawed and chopped at proper length during this year. In the early years, water for cooking and washing with was carried in buckets directly from the stream, and our toilets consisted of two lovely yard houses, complete with Sears Roebuck catalogue for toilet paper and cutouts in the shape of moons and stars for windows.*

*The [unintelligible] boys have learned the art of plumbing from our machine shop instructor and not many years passed before they would install the system and running water. The pipe was laid to take water out of the creek well above the campsite to deliver it on gravity, close without*

*[unintelligible] attached. Year after year, the system was improved until today, there in the midst of the woods there are flush toilets, hot and cold showers, plenty of running water in the kitchen and outdoor wash basins for personal cleanliness. Gradually too, the tents were replaced by cabins. All [unintelligible] by the boys and their teachers in those early years.*

*All through the years of the Voorhis School been mentioned, work contributed during summer to the camp. But there was also time for other activities. Horseshoe pitching tournaments were approved as the recreation—so were baseball games. Those interested, as many of the boys were, engaged in nature studies, collected specimens for the school museum, compiled lists [of] flowers and trees observed in the vicinity of the camp. Evenings were [usually] out at an outdoor campfire, singing songs and telling stories. On Sundays, there was always a chapel service under the pines. Only a few miles from our camp was a [inaudible] at the Orange River, appropriately known as Hot Creek; there was a [unintelligible] of geysers bubbled up with hot water into the stream [and] at the end, kept the water for a considerable distance, the varying degrees of temperature—all the way from warm to cold.*

*Certainly, let's just say, was a favorite place for getting cleaned up from the dust and dirt of camping. And I've got to make many trips to Hot Creek with loads of boys. Today, this place is a popular resort for bathing and swimming. In fact, the bath houses were constructed on the block above the creek, where bathers can just [inaudible]. But 40 years ago, when Mammoth was only just a ranger station, a couple of houses and Mrs. Kenny's store would usually have the hot creek all to ourselves.*

*Each summer, we found a porcupine in the brush leaves along its banks. Each summer, our school mascot [inaudible]. Instead of getting a nose full of porcupine quill, [unintelligible] would have been fifteen of the boys and I would extract. A couple of years, we still [unintelligible] every inch of the bank with hot creek and the bluff that line this court. In the caves, none of the overhanging [unintelligible] or ledges of these banks. We found many people of Indian back[ground] to be impoverished. Silent reminders of the days when our previous predecessors in California must have found a marvelous comfort—especially in the winter—in the warm water of the streams.*

*Mountain climbing and exploration in discovery [of] heights were main events each summer. We climbed Mammoth Mountain several times; those who climbed San Joaquin Peak does [unintelligible] and many times, the lower mountains behind the camp on the way to Sherwin Lake. My favorite trip, made possible only by a bus ride, was through the extreme volcano craters [at] South Mono Lake. There aren't many craters in the world of shiny black obsidian rock, from which the Indians slash many of their own arrowheads. It was, for some reason, [a] prize for the boys and watching the new tons of that were collected and transported back to the spirits [unintelligible] to find place in the school museum or man [unintelligible] or injured.*

*Often, these expeditions require more than one day, in which cases blankets had to be carried as well as rations for the needed and most welcome meals. I buy [and] it was always the same and for some strange reason, all those reasonably passed over to the boys. It consisted of tea, bacon, dried peaches and apricots, and sourdough biscuits. Our only cooking utensils were a couple of*

*numbered tin cans with the tops cleanly removed, and a pair of pliers of which to manage in the only open fire.*

*In one of these, we would heat the water for the tea. In the other, we would put the dried peaches with apricots. Each of us carried his own cup that served both drinking the tea and eating the sweets. The bacon was cooked on some sticks over the fire; everyone cutting his own sticks for that purpose. Now for the sourdough biscuits, they were peripheral and wonderful creations. Rations of a manner I'd learn some years before while working on a ranch in Wyoming. The ingredients [are] simply flour, baking powder, salt, water, and hot condensed milk might be available. Sometimes, for a special treat, raisins were added. The dough, once kneaded, was best baked over an open fire. But after we had installed our camp stove in the lodge, the toaster oven was used. This oven was used often inappropriately [unintelligible] where the principal means of achieving the pangs of hunger after a long hike. Regular rations with four of them per person per meal. So, if we were to be out for two or three days and if our party was a large one, the number of biscuits that we made became substantial. On one occasion, I recall baking no less than 800. So, one well [unintelligible] three-day trip into the mountains, I always had plenty of help with the baking of the biscuits since the boys actually seem to like them.*

*However, some hikes stand out in memory from all the rest. One of these was a four day, 80-mile trip over the ridges of the Sierras, down into Yosemite Valley and back. This was an undertaking we've talked about many times; we knew it would be a grueling journey, so the younger and smaller boys were ruled out as participants, although they protested some of them. Seven of the older boys were eager to go to see if we can make it, if they could. It would've been O'Brien, now a judge of the California Industrial Accident Commission; his younger brother Eddie, a referee of the Workmen's Compensation Board; Willard Devanter, who was recently retired from the Navy with the rank of captain; Jeffrey Rowland, now a successful contractor in Almaty; Emory Laraway, now a licensed pathologist; Rome Rooney, who has become a proprietor of two men's clothing stores in Orange County; and Donald Wheeler, the only one of the seven who has not kept in touch since graduating from our school.*

*The sourdough biscuits were baked the night before and on an early July morning, we drove in the trucks as far as we could on the road that [unintelligible] from the June Lake looped. At that time, we came to a dead end near June Lake. We left the truck there, shouldered our pack, and set up brush creek for [unintelligible], who passed. We gained the pass in the howling wind about noon and began our long descent to the beautiful high country on the west slope of the Sierras where the headwaters of [unintelligible] Creek, could not yet reach the beautiful [unintelligible] meadows when the sun was setting over the peaks of the west.*

*We selected the likely spot under some towering ponderosa pines, and near sparkling streams for overnight camp. We build our fires, [unintelligible] our dried peaches, boiled water for our tea, then cooked our bacon and made bacon sandwiches with our sourdough biscuits. The trash is part of the meal as always with the juice produced from the stewing of the peaches; this was carefully rationed so that everyone had quite exactly the same share. We slept in our blankets [on] the ground around the fire, which we took turns replenishing. Needless to say, we were awake with the first rays of the sun and after an exact repeat of the previous night, we were on our way.*

*We knew we had some 25 to 30 miles to cover, in order to reach the floor of the Yosemite Valley, so we walked hard. But we were on good trails now, so the going was easier than in the higher country; and we were traveling light, for we had left our blankets, all our cooking utensils, and most of our food at our night camping place. We were perfectly confident that they would all still be there unmolested when we came back. We hiked to the lovely [unintelligible] meadows, where we found a few parties of campers and came to the field of [unintelligible].*

*Our course had been jarringly north to this point, but now we turn west on the road and made good time, not stopping to even eat our biscuits. But first, the truck gave us a welcome ride for a few miles and some invaluable guidance as to where we can lead the road on a trail that would lead to the brink of Yosemite Falls. Twenty miles farther on, we thought we had found that trail. So, we left the road and followed the trail on thirty feet down gave way to a beautiful a grove of open forests and fern pines as could be found anywhere on Earth.*

*Luckily, we'd been right about the trail and about mid-afternoon, we heard a roar of water and came out of the woods on the banks of Yosemite Creek, just where it plunges over the precipice toward the valley below. From there, of course, our way was evident enough so we could see the apparently tiny buildings in the valley below. But the zig zags, switch back trails seemingly almost straight down would take all remaining daylight before we completed our descent. After we had finished, there was no longer the slightest doubt in my mind that the falls of the Yosemite are indeed the highest ones in the world. That night, we slept in beds in the park in a profound sleep as well.*

*Fortunately, park noises woke us early, but we had to cover all of 30 miles back to our camp, high on the mountains that day. And in contrast to the previous day, it would be all uphill. So, we spent only a little time seeing the wonders of Yosemite park; we took a different trail this time – one that led out of the eastern extremity of the valley. But while that has been an unforgettable experience—to be companions to the great falls of the descending view—we hardly relished the almost perpendicular climb. To make this story of our very long and grueling climb—from 4,000 to 9,000 feet in elevation—ridiculously short, we simply said that it was long passing. One by one, each staggered into our camp, found our belongings quite unmolested and ravenously [unintelligible] before falling dead tired into our blankets. We completed the hike back over 11,000 feet down the [unintelligible] path and down the east slope, from the mighty range to our truck the next day. We're back to the school camp before eating. Bob Balch, legend, has supper ready and we ate like bears.*

*Another of our most memorable adventures was our climb to Mt. Whitney, highest peak in the United States outside of Alaska. Today, a road has been built, which enabled hikers to drive a considerable [way] up Whitney Canyon before the walk begins, not so in 1931. Then the road came to an abrupt end farther in and below the canyon [than] now. There I parked the school bus early one June morning in the year 1931. This time, most of the boys were eager to make the climb but had still preferred to stay with the bus and hunt butterflies and other specimen for the school museum during the two days we expected to be gone. I remember that I left them there to*

*care for themselves without the slightest concern that any harm would be hauled in or that any trouble would arise among them while they were on their own.*

*The forest ranger at Lone Pine has told us that we could try it if we wanted to, but that it was impossible to climb Whitney so early in the year because of the snow. This only made the boys more determined – confident now – and to be quite honest, it had the same effect on me. So, off we went. The first mile or so was through the chaparral of the alluvial fan of the base of the mountain, but then we entered the beautiful Whitney Canyon where most of our way was shaded by the forest. [There] we passed waterfall after waterfall. That first day, we climbed to almost 10,000 feet of elevation where we found a lovely lake and helped us find a place for our overnight camp; but a horrible attack by millions of mosquitoes [unintelligible], and we climbed another 1,000 feet to a place by the trail where there was no mosquitoes, partly [unintelligible] that because it was so bitterly cold.*

*Most of the boys slept like logs besides the fire despite the cold—I preferred by the fire. Next morning, we set out for the summit and soon came to a vast area where the switch back trails were buried in the [unintelligible] feet of snow. But the morning sun has stopped just enough so that by digging our toes into the snow, we were able to climb straight up the mountainside. The snow was actually a tremendous help to us, not a hindrance. Next, we came to the ridge and made easy work to the gradual ascent and from there, to the summit.*

*We ate our lunch around the Sierra Club; we took pictures of each other and the panoramic of what seemed the world that looked before us, from the highest point in our country. Climax of the movie was a shot of a boy named Alfred Marmolejo standing on top of the canyon. In later life, he served for many years on the Los Angeles Police Department, much of it working with juveniles. Then we started down, the school bank helped even more this time. So, we simply slid down a steep slope at no time at all, thus saving perhaps a mile or so of hiking.*

*We made the entire descent in that one afternoon. One of the boys made the whole trip barefoot. These were happy years; despite the fact that the heavy hands of the Great Depression [were] on the land, they were years of growth and learning. But in 1938, things changed; that same Depression that sat the [unintelligible] school provided by my father, Charles B. Voorhis, of Pasadena. Income had been cut by more than half; we've been using capital each year. For some of the boys' care, the county paid us \$25 a month per boy, only a tiny fraction of our cost. So, one parent was living there; they paid what they could, which [unintelligible] the first year. But probably half of the boys were schooled in [unintelligible] at the entire financial cost, so the end of our resources was in sight.*

*Furthermore, I had with questionable judgement, perhaps, got myself elected to Congress, representing the then 12<sup>th</sup> California district. We decided that we were to make plans for the care of each boy elsewhere and give the school property, [valued] certainly in seven figures, to an agency that would bind itself to carry on vital education to work there. In the end, the conditional gift was made to California Polytechnic Institute; the president at the time was the dynamic Julian McPhee.*

*For several years, the Voorhis campus of Cal Poly was alive with students, with school programs being carried on there, particularly in subtropical agriculture. It was, and is, an ideal place for the study of ecology, California agriculture, and horticulture. Not only because of the very natural environment, but also because of the plantings: the many kinds of fruit trees, shrubs, flowers, and food crops, which we had made.*

*However, only a few years after the gift of the Voorhis Campus, Cal Poly acquired the Kellogg Ranch property over the hills near Pomona. The Kellogg Foundation also provided funds for buildings. So, it came about that gradually Cal Poly moved its programs to its new campus at Pomona. For a time, the Voorhis Campus was used as a conference center, but even today, even that has been moved to the new Kellogg West facility on the Pomona campus. To meet this situation, an extremely able committee of Cal Poly faculty appointed by President Robert Kramer developed an excellent plan for the full use of the Voorhis Campus in a program of the innovative education. In the preparing disadvantaged young people for entry, on a basis of equality with other students in the college or university, the Trustees of the state college system approved the plan, but not a dollar for its implementation as the Reagan administration were willing to provide.*

*Consequently, as this article was written, a beautiful school property, worth at today's price of several million dollars, was idle and years [unintelligible] wasting. This is property of the people of California who valiantly responded for [unintelligible] of youth. It even made money to provide the very minimum maintenance for the ground since it [unintelligible] each of the Cal Poly officials. The furnishings in one of the most beautiful chapels in Southern California are gradually falling apart, and there's no money to even repair these. The Cal Poly administration has been driven to try to lease the Voorhis Campus for a similar educational institution.*

*At least one sub-agency, a home for boys not unlike the Voorhis School, offered a possibility that would satisfy the terms of the grand [unintelligible] of the state college system. But what our family thought was rather a generous gesture toward our state, is presently being treated by the administration in Sacramento as if it was a worthless toy.*

*So, however this [unintelligible] may be for the San Dimas campus, the High Sierras Camp had a very different history. But it was not given away, instead the lease formerly held by the Voorhis School was transferred to the Association of Voorhis School Alumni. This meant that we still had a place of our own; even though a rather distant one, where we could have our reunion. We've been to meetings, nearly twice a year, where the former boys of the school and those of us who were their teachers can gather for an exchange of experience and renewal of the spirits that pervaded our school community during this lifetime.*

*The principal times for such reunions at the campus was on Memorial Day and Labor Day weekend, and they still are. For a while, it was a welcome circumstance for us to have the camp to go through when we could. It hardly constituted adequate use of that place of inspiration and recreation. As the boys grew older, became husbands, fathers, and in many cases, grandfathers, the Alumni Association took a more mature interest in the camp. Craftsmen, in many cases, they improved the buildings, the water and sewage system, the lighting on the grounds. Although officers of the Alumni Association began making active search for groups that can make different*

*camps during each season, Boy Scouts, YMCA groups, and churches were among those that did so one time or another; but in all of these cases, there were only one or two newcomers.*

*What the Voorhis School Alumni Association wanted to do was to provide for other boys how many advantages and values they themselves would enjoy in their growing years. Glenn Crippen, an owner of a fine ambulance service in Monrovia, was for several years the most dynamic president of the Alumni Association; his brother Jack was the city councilman in El Monte, who also operated in ambulance service there. Jeffrey Rowland had been secretary of Carpenter's Local 1507 in El Monte, and chairman of the El Monte coordinating council.*

*And located in El Monte was the Boy's Club of San Gabriel Valley, one of the finest Boy's Clubs in the entire nation. Plus, it came about that the Voorhis Viking Alumni Association, led by Glenn Crippen, offered to the Boy's Club of San Gabriel Valley the full use of the Sherwin Creek Camp. [Unintelligible] with payment of one dollar a year and the vital interest in fully using and further improving the camp. Glenn Crippen lived just long enough to see this plan in operation, then sadly for all of us, passed away from a heart attack; but his work had been done.*

*The Voorhis School alumni still have their reunions at the camp each Memorial and Labor Day – that is part of the agreement. But during all the rest of the year, the camp is for use by the Boy's Club of San Gabriel Valley. Twenty to thirty boys at a time, all from disadvantaged homes in the San Gabriel Valley and many of them are hard-to-reach kids, go for ten days at the mountains at the Voorhis camp. Each summer, from 200 to 300 boys have this experience under trained leadership.*

*When the time is coming when these numbers will be much larger, for the leadership of the greater El Monte community has now joined the Voorhis School Alumni in building up that camp. Urged by the remarkably dedicated Board of Directors of the Boy's Club, interested El Monte people donate or sell at drastically reduced prices in material and equipment for the upbuilding of the camp. Work parties now include not only the old boys from the Voorhis school, but the mayor, city councilmen, the fire chief, members of the Lion's Club, consultants, CPAs, manufacturers, merchants, schoolmen, and other El Monte community leaders. More cabins were being built, and new [inaudible] plans; a water purification system has been installed. In short, that piece of acreage and the High Sierras has become a kind of focus of human goodwill for one entire Southern California community, and that is precisely the result for which all of us who live together at the Voorhis School during this lifetime had hoped.*

**KK:** That is the story of the High Sierras camp was told—by Jerry Voorhis, who with his father and mother established the Voorhis School for Boys, and which is now the Voorhis campus of California State Polytechnic University, Pomona in San Dimas. This was read to you by Ken Kitch: professor emeritus, Communications and Art, Cal Poly Pomona, who is developing written history and oral history of the Voorhis campus, and wanted to be sure and make this a part of the oral history collection. For the sake of accuracy, it should be pointed out, of course, that this was read in 1975. In fact, this was noted at the introduction on the day after Easter—March 31, 1975. Some of Jerry's remarks about the use of the campus have been altered since he was favorably impressed with the current use being made by specific faculty, in establishing a Bible school under temporary lease arrangement there. But [it's leased] as only a holding

operation until the university once again can come forth with the plan for introducing residents in a disciplinary program there.

**End of Tape 1 – High Sierra Camp Letter by Jerry Voorhis read by Kenneth Kitch**

## Beginning of Tape 2 – Letter by Alfred Marmolejo read by Kenneth Kitch

**KK:** [I am] professor emeritus of Communication Arts of California State Polytechnic University, Pomona in San Dimas. This is an addendum to the oral history collection, which has been established, giving the history of the Voorhis campus. This additional cassette is obtained from a letter, written to the recorder of the Voorhis history, by Alfred Marmolejo: M-a-r-m-o-l-e-j-o. Living at the time at 308 East Edgeway Road, Los Angeles. In retirement as an employee of the Goodrich Rubber Co., and as a longtime former Los Angeles City police force member, specializing in juvenile work.

**KK:** That's where Jerry Voorhis remembers him well, mentioning him in Jerry's description of the High Sierra Camp on another cassette collection. Also, for this purpose—in this particular cassette—Jerry remembers him, and I quote, "He was one of our first boys sent to us from the all-nations in East Los Angeles. He was a very dark-skinned Latin American; he developed into one of the best athletes we ever had. It was to him that our boys presented one of their exhibits of loyalty to each other. A large group had gone to Covina for an afternoon at a swimming pool there, something of a busman's holiday since they had a pool of their own at the Voorhis school. But they found the pool's management wouldn't admit Al Marmolejo because of his race. So, the entire group announced that if Al couldn't go in, they wouldn't—and they came home."

**KK:** After a good many years on the Los Angeles police force during which he specialized in juvenile work, Marmolejo—with a large family to support—joined the Goodrich Tire Company personnel and recently retired from that. Here is the letter that Al wrote in 1971 when he learned that the history of the Voorhis school was being compiled:

*I came to the Voorhis school in 1927. I'm one of the original Voorhis boys. I came there through the recommendation of the All-Nations Boys Club located at 6<sup>th</sup> and Gladys Avenue in Los Angeles. Why I was selected from such a large enrollment of boys in [the] All-Nations club is still a mystery to me. But looking back now, I can readily see why I was selected. I became an orphan—[lost] a mother at four years and an orphan of father at five [years]. I was bouncing around from one relation to another, and no place to call home. I joined the All-Nations Boys Club and there the supervisor learned of my predicaments. They saw I needed a home, parental health, guidance, supervision, and an education. I will tell you here and now that I received these and much more at Voorhis School; I cannot emphasize enough how fortunate I was to become a Voorhis boy.*

*When I first went to Voorhis, I was just like a wild animal; I didn't know right from wrong. I had absolutely no manners. I lied, I stole, I cheated to stay alive. I had no supervision or guidance except what little I learned at All-Nations, the short time I was there. So, with these characteristics and credentials, you can readily see where I was headed—I could very easily have become a first-rate convict. But the Voorhis School changed all that; with the love and guidance of Jerry [who] personally adopted [me] as my father because I never really knew one; with the understanding and care of Mrs. Jerry Voorhis; with the humanitarianism of Uncle Charlie [Charles B. Voorhis]; with the graciousness and tender example of Aunt Nel [Ella Voorhis]; with the vitality of my house mother Mrs. Noise; with the strong hands and sharp minds of the educators namely Mr. Nay, Mr. Balch, Mr. Rice, Ms. Livingston, and others.*

*With all this help, I developed into a gentleman with a purpose in mind. That purpose was to love our fellow men, to follow the Golden Rule, and to seek peace on Earth in goodwill toward men. People say there was a Depression—the only reason we were aware of it was because we read about it. Actually, we lived like kings.*

*Periodically, our housemothers would take inventory of our clothing and other needs. Then, they would get together on a Saturday and buy us everything we needed. All the buildings and furniture were new—we had the best food available and all we could eat. We had all day athletic equipment necessary; we had a large athletic field and the largest swimming pool in Southern California at the time. We had a mechanical shop, a print shop, a chapel—in short, we had everything imaginable.*

*This was the perfect school for boys—a true finishing school in the better sense of the word. Whenever we went anywhere or any place, all we had to do was to mention ‘We’re some of the Voorhis boys’ [and] we would be happily accepted without any questions, and we were very proud of this fact. Whenever we had school dances, our administrators would contact the girls’ school and make arrangements—*

—This is a parenthetical remark right here. Jerry remembers the girls’ school was generally the Larousse School for Girls at Azusa, at what later became the side of the lock hill on the school for boys, on whose board of directors Jerry now sits. Resuming quotations from the letter from Alfred Marmelejo—

*Then the girls would be transported to Voorhis by bus, full of chaperones. Each girl would select a name and pin it on her dress; we would have a name corresponding to theirs. When the girls arrived, we would greet them and form partners; we would then escort the young ladies into the ballroom (the library [cleared off] its tables and chairs). We were not permitted to leave the immediate grounds with or without our partner until the dance was over. Talk about chivalry, etiquette, manners. We were up to the latest of everything; you can very well visualize the ball of the George Washington era. At the termination of the dance, the girls were boarded on the bus and bid goodnight.*

*Our athletic program was well scheduled. We competed against such schools as Bonita High, Chino Prep, Cal Prep at Claremont, and the William Wrigley School for Boys at Catalina Island; we would make trips on the S.S. Catalina to meet the Wrigley boys on their home ground, then they would in turn visit our school.*

*It was during one of these events at Voorhis that I had the great honor and privilege of meeting Will Rogers Sr. We became great pals; each time he would visit Voorhis, he would immediately look for me. He used to toss me on his lap. He liked me best, maybe, because we could both speak a little Spanish—he loved this.*

*We purchased a campsite known as the Voorhis’ Viking Camp, to be discussed in detail later. It is located in the High Sierras near Bishop. When this purchase was made, Jerry and I went to this little broken-down shack of real estate. There, Jerry wrote the necessary rough draft on the*

*purchase of the property, which I still have in my possession. Since Uncle Charlie was instrumental in the building of the Rose Bowl, the organization would honor him by sending him several tickets to the New Year's game. These tickets were issued to Jerry for distribution to the boys for the outstanding school grades. I was very fortunate to attend several of these games such as the USC/ PIT, Cal/Georgia Tech, and each year we would attend the Rose Parade.*

*During the winter months, when the adjoining farmers needed help to turn on their smudge pots to keep the orange and lemons crops from freezing, they would contact the school for help. The older boys would work to supplement their own financial needs; we didn't need to work, and no one told us to, but we did it because we wanted to. On a voluntary basis, all of the boys at Voorhis would give up their breakfast each Sunday; all of the money that would thus be saved up at the end of the year was used to buy food and gifts for the very poor at all the neighboring towns.*

*During Christmastime, a group of us—under the leadership of Jerry—would visit hospitals and sing Christmas carols. On Thanksgiving Day, Uncle Charlie would lease the dining room at the Hotel Vista de la Royal or the Huntington Hotel in Pasadena for our exclusive use for Thanksgiving dinner. As far as I know, and I stand to be corrected, when Jerry graduated from Yale, Uncle Charlie asked him what he wanted for a graduation present. Jerry replied, 'I want a school for boys.' So, Voorhis School was born.*

—And here's another parenthetical note: this is another pleasant and perhaps a powerful anecdote about Jerry, but Jerry says it is not true. End of note. Resumption of the letter—

*To the best of my knowledge, all the boys at Voorhis turned out well. That is some record for such a large group of people. Not all of us became wealthy or occupied executive positions, but in the real sense of the word, all of us are good, true Americans, believing in the love of God and country, owing no allegiance but to the United States of America. If we could've paid a million dollars in exchange for an education and breeding, we could not have received better results than those we received at the Voorhis School for Boys. So, let us not forget how poor and humble we once were, and from whence we came. Let us share our good fortunes and love with all men throughout the world, proving always that Voorhis was a very special way of life.*

**End of Tape 2 – Letter by Alfred Marmolejo read by Kenneth Kitch**

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